

energypedia - connecting knowledge

You are looking for information about the energy situation in - let's say - Nepal or Rwanda? You want to know how to plan for improved cooking stoves or how to market solar systems? Maybe you also have practical experience or theoretical ideas about renewable energy in a certain region which could be a benefit to other experts? Then, Lisa Feldmann recommends you should visit www.energypedia.info, the platform on renewable energy and energy efficiency and join the community of practitioners and experts.

Access to energy

With the UN declaring 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, access to energy has become one of the hot issues on the international agenda. One in five people live without access to electricity. Every third person cooks on smoky stoves which are detrimental to the health of families and the environment.

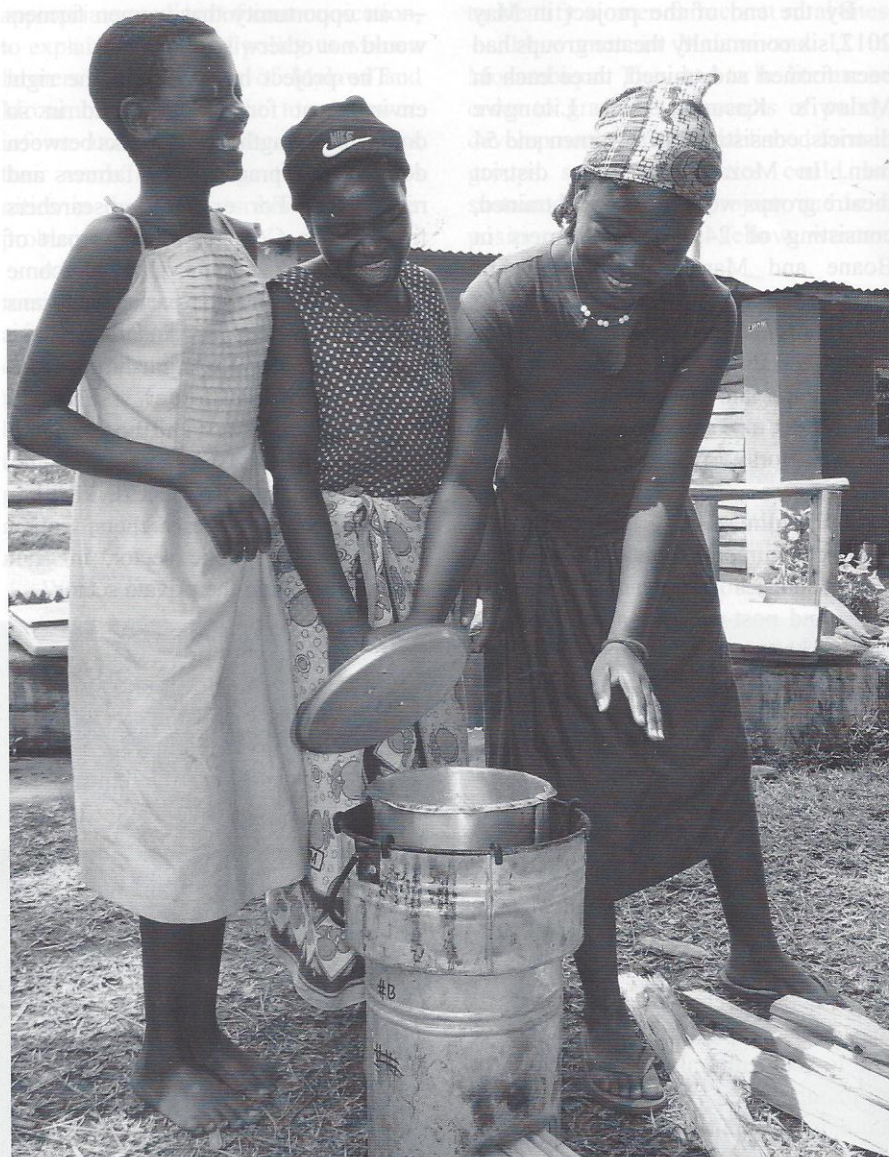
Without energy, no food can be cooked. Without lighting, public life comes to a halt at dusk. Enterprises need energy to produce. Social facilities such as hospitals need energy to operate and keep drugs cool. Supplying modern energy sources to communities is therefore a key challenge of the 21st century.

Most conventional development projects, however, increase the demand for fossil fuels and exacerbate global climate change. An expansion of renewable energy is therefore crucial for developing and industrialised countries. Practical knowledge, however, is often available only in fragments, restricted to a certain region or not available to the general public at all.

Be a light – share your knowledge

Energypedia, the wiki for renewable energy and energy efficiency in the context of development, aims to overcome these knowledge barriers. "We believe that knowledge sharing is power", says Benjamin Rebenich from energypedia. "We strive for a world of free knowledge exchange and mutual learning on renewable energy in which everyone has access to sustainable energy sources".

Energypedia offers a wiki platform for information exchange among experts from development organisations, academia, and the private and public sectors. The website is designed so that its users can create or edit content without any specialist computer skills.



This energy-efficient Rocket stove is used in Malawi. Experience on how to market improved stoves and how to test efficiency is available for anyone to see on the energypedia web site.

Credit GIZ

"On energypedia.info, registered users can easily write and revise articles on technologies such as solar home systems, micro hydro power or improved cookstoves", says Rebenich. "We invite all practitioners to share their knowledge and experience in project implementation to achieve the goal of universal access to energy. And of course, we can advise wiki beginners how to write good articles."

Besides technological aspects, experience with rural electrification, productive use and impacts of renewable energy and energy efficiency can be found on the platform. Contributions to existing articles as well as new articles are highly welcomed. Furthermore, users are not just limited to writing articles, they can also contribute to databases on small solar PV applica-

tions and micro hydro power, too.

Or participate in the Total Energy Wiki by collecting data on accessing energy sources and thus contributing to the international debate on defining and measuring access to renewable energy. The international development and technology charity Practical Action has partnered with energypedia to set up this online data collection tool.

Be connected

Besides hosting more than 750 articles, energypedia offers its users also the possibility to share events and to connect to each other in different groups of interest or via messages. Already more than 2100 energy experts from all around the world have registered for energypedia. Up to now, the platform has been viewed over two million times.

History – where it all started

Energypedia was initially launched in 2010 by the Dutch-German energy partnership Energising Development (EnDev), which is implemented by the

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

In summer 2011, energypedia constituted itself as an independent non-profit company, which took over responsibilities in March 2012.

“We wanted to ensure the platform keeps on running, even if EnDev came to an end in the future”, says Robert Heine from GIZ, and one of the founders. He strongly believes in the use of Web 2.0 applications “to make development cooperation more effective, transparent and efficient by connecting experts and promoting knowledge exchange”.

Financing energypedia

Being independent from EnDev and GIZ, energypedia now relies on grants and donations from organisations, companies, and private individuals which share its vision of fostering energy access for all by providing relevant information and exchange possibilities. While a first grant came from GIZ, energypedia needs further financial

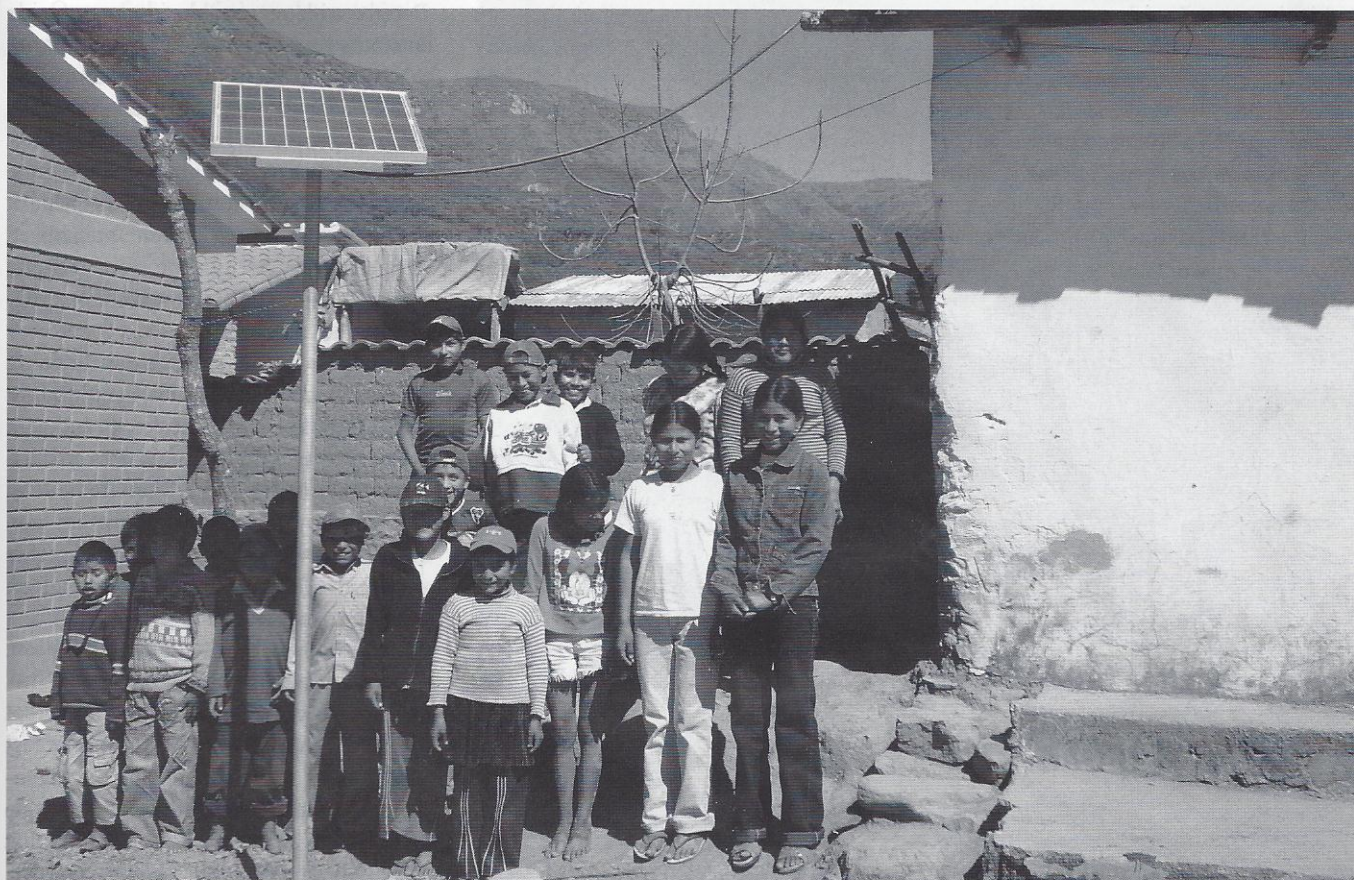
support in the future to continue offering free access to content on renewable energies in developing countries. More information on donation possibilities can be found by clicking on the donate button on energypedia’s main page.

Outlook

Energypedia aims at providing even more high quality articles on renewable energies and energy efficiency in the future. A new portal on mobility is in progress as well as a discussion tool. However, the platform relies on contributions from energy experts all around the world. Energypedia thus invites all users to share their knowledge for supporting the promotion of sustainable energy for all.

Join energypedia. Be a light – be connected – be part of energypedia!

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A solar home system used in a Bolivian school. More details of such systems and their impacts can be ascertained and shared on the energypedia web site.

Credit GIZ